

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. In a network configured computer processing system having a plurality of client computers and a plurality of host computers, a method for delivering interactive links for presenting applications and information from remote sources on the network, the 5 method comprising:

retrieving, in response to a request of a client computer, over a first communication connection informational content having computer program code embedded therein and executing the embedded computer program code for establishing a 10 second communication connection to a second host computer;

retrieving, over the second communication connection, first information including presentation information for presenting an application and second information;

presenting, at the client computer, the application and the second information based upon the presentational information; and

15 storing, on the client computer, an interactive link for selectively re-establishing the second communication connection to the second host computer for retrieving the first information and presenting the application and the second information.

2. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the presentational information 20 includes at least one of instructions for rendering components of the presented application, default parameters and data values exhibited within the components, and application-specific business logic for processing input to the presented application.

3. The method as claimed in claim 1, comprising:
 - downloading to the client computer a graphical representation of the interactive link;
 - associating, at the client computer, the graphical representation with a file containing information representing an operating environment of the client computer and a network address of the second host computer; and
 - displaying the graphical representation on the client computer.
4. The method as claimed in claim 3, comprising allowing a user of the client computer to drag and drop the graphical representation onto the client computer.
5. The method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the graphical representation includes information for identifying the presented application and the second information invoked by the interactive link and a symbol for indicating that the graphical representation is of an interactive link.
6. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the information for identifying is comprised of at least one of an icon and a label representing a commercially recognizable brand name of at least one of the presented application and the second information.
7. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the symbol is comprised of a teardrop-shaped symbol.

8. The method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the file further contains instructions for rendering components of the presented application, default parameters and data values exhibited within the components, and application-specific business logic for processing input to the presented application, and wherein the instructions override at least a portion of the first information retrieved from the second host computer.

5 9. The method as claimed in claim 3, comprising:

the user selecting the graphical representation; and

in response to the selection, accessing the contents of the file associated with the

10 graphical representation and re-establishing the second communication connection to the second host computer for retrieving the first information and presenting the application and the second information associated to the interactive link.

15 10. The method as claimed in claim 9, comprising:

storing, at the second host computer, information representing a first operating state of the application and the second information presented to the user; and

in response to the selection of the graphical representation, presenting the first operating state information as the application and the second information are again presented to the user.

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11. The method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the first operating state information is presented to the user at any one of the plurality of client computers.

12. The method as claimed in claim 1, comprising transmitting a copy of the interactive link to a next client computer such that the next client computer is operable for selectively establishing a communication connection to the second host computer for retrieving the first information and presenting, at the next client computer, the application and the second information.

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13. The method as claimed in claim 12, comprising storing information for tracking transmissions of interactive links between the plurality of client computers.

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14. The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the information for tracking comprises a global unique identifier that is assigned to the interactive link and information for identifying each client computer that has received the interactive link.

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15. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the network configured computer processing system includes an Internet connection and the client computer includes a desktop-based repository for links to the present applications and the second information and an Internet-based repository for the links, and wherein the storing of the interactive link comprises selectively storing the interactive link in one of the desktop-based repository and the internet-based repository.

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16. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the network configured computer processing system includes an Internet connection and the client computer includes a desktop-based repository for links to the present applications and the second information

and an Internet-based repository for the links, and wherein the storing of the interactive link comprises storing the interactive link in both of the desktop-based repository and the internet-based repository.

5 17. A network configured computer processing system, comprising:

 a plurality of client computers, each having an application program code, an operating system program code and a presentation client program code operating thereon, said application program code for requesting informational content stored remotely across said network;

10 a first server computer for storing said informational content, a predetermined portion of said informational content having computer program code embedded therein, said first server for delivering said informational content in response to requests from said client computers;

 a second server computer for storing applications and second information invoked by said embedded computer program code and first information including presentational information for presenting said invoked applications and second information;

15 a communication connection established between a requesting client computer and said second server by said operating system program code, said presentation client program code and said embedded computer program code, said communication connection for receiving said first information and for presenting said invoked application and said second information at said requesting client computer; and

 an interactive link, stored at said requesting client computer, for selectively re-establishing said communication connection for receiving said first information and for

presenting said invoked application and said second information from said second server computer.

18. The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein said presentational information
5 includes at least one of instructions for rendering components of said presented application and said second information, default parameters and data values exhibited within said components, and application-specific business logic for processing input to said presented application.

10 19. The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein said interactive link includes a graphical representation displayed on said client computer and a file containing information representing an operating environment of said client computer and a network address of said second server computer.

15 20. The system as claimed in claim 19, wherein said graphical representation includes a symbol for indicating that said graphical representation is of an interactive link and at least one of an icon and a label representing a commercially recognizable brand name of at least one of said presented applications and said second information.

20 21. The system as claimed in claim 17, comprising:

a data repository for storing, at said second server computer, information representing a first operating state of said applications and said second information presented to a particular user at a client computer; and

means for retrieving and presenting said first operating state information from said data repository as said invoked application and said second information is represented to said particular user.

5 22. The system as claimed in claim 17, comprising means for transmitting and storing a copy of said interactive link to a next client computer such that said next client computer is operable for selectively invoking said applications and said second information and for forming said communication connection between said next client computer and said second server computer.

10 23. The system as claimed in claim 22, comprising a data repository for storing information for tracking transmissions of said interactive links between said plurality of client computers.

15 24. The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein said network further includes an Internet connection and said client computers include a desktop-based repository for said inactive links to said presented applications and said second information and an Internet-based repository for said interactive links, and wherein said interactive links are selectively stored in one of said desktop-based repository and said internet-based 20 repository.

25. The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein said network further includes an Internet connection and said client computers include a desktop-based repository for said

inactive links to said presented applications and said second information and an Internet-based repository for said interactive links, and wherein said interactive links are selectively stored in both of said desktop-based repository and said internet-based repository.

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26. A computer processing system, comprising:

a plurality of client computers;

a plurality of server computers;

a network operatively coupling said plurality of client computers to said plurality

10 of server computers; and

computer program code for presenting over said network, in response to a selection of an interactive link, applications and first information stored in a first of said plurality of server computers, said computer program code comprising:

a plurality of computer program code segments embedded within informational content stored at a second of said plurality of server computers and delivered to a requesting one of said plurality of client computers;

an operating system program code segment, one executable at each of said plurality of client computers; and

a plurality of presentation client computer program code segments, one executable at each of said plurality of client computers, for retrieving presentational information and presenting at each of said client computers, in cooperation with said operating system computer program code segment, said applications and said first information based on said presentational information.